

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image processing system comprising:

a requester apparatus for making a request for a process;

5 a processing apparatus for executing the requested process; and

an accounting apparatus for charging for the executed process, wherein:

10 the processing apparatus includes at least one processing unit for executing the requested process; and

the accounting apparatus includes:

an accounting amount calculation unit for calculating accounting amount for the executed process; and

15 a accounting processing unit for performing an accounting processing on the basis of the calculated accounting amount.

2. The image processing system according to claim 1, 20 wherein:

the requester apparatus requests the processing apparatus to perform an image processing upon image data and an image formation processing on the basis of the processed image data;

the processing apparatus further includes:

25 a first image processing unit for executing the

requested image processing upon the image data; and  
an image formation unit for executing the image  
formation processing of the image data subjected to the  
image processing;

5 the accounting apparatus includes a first accounting  
amount calculation unit for calculating a first accounting  
amount for the executed image processing; and

the accounting processing unit executes the accounting  
processing of charging the requester apparatus, which requests  
10 the processing apparatus to perform the image processing and  
the image formation processing, for the calculated first  
charging amount.

3. The image processing system according to claim 2,  
15 wherein:

the accounting apparatus further includes a second  
accounting amount calculation unit for calculating a second  
accounting amount for the executed image formation processing;  
and

20 the accounting processing unit charges the requester  
apparatus, which requests the processing apparatus to perform  
the image processing and the image formation processing, for  
the calculated first accounting amount and the calculated second  
accounting amount.

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4. The image processing system according to claim 2,  
wherein:

the requester apparatus is a plurality of requester  
apparatuses;

5 at least one of the requester apparatuses includes a second  
image processing unit for performing the requested image  
processing;

the processing apparatus requests the at least one of  
the requester apparatuses, which includes the second image  
10 processing unit, to execute the requested image processing;  
and

the first accounting amount calculation unit of the  
accounting apparatus changes the first accounting amount in  
response to which of the processing apparatus and the at least  
15 one of the requester apparatuses including the second image  
processing unit has executed the image processing.

5. The image processing system according to claim 4,  
wherein:

20 the image processing includes a plurality of processing  
elements; and

the processing apparatus requests the at least one of  
the requester apparatuses including the second image processing  
unit to execute the requested image processing for each of the  
25 processing elements included in the image processing.

6. The image processing system according to claim 5,  
wherein the first accounting amount calculation unit of the  
accounting apparatus changes the first accounting amount in  
5 response to which of the processing apparatus and the at least  
one of the requester apparatuses including the second image  
processing unit has executed each of the processing elements  
included in the image processing.

10 7. The image processing system according to claim 2,  
wherein:

the processing apparatus further has an authentication  
unit for authenticating the requester unit; and

the processing unit executes a process requested from  
15 the authenticated requester apparatus.

8. The image processing system according to claim 2,  
wherein the image processing is a correction processing of  
correcting the image data on the basis of the characteristic  
20 of the image formation unit.

9. An accounting apparatus for charging for a process  
for image data, executed in response to a request from a requester,  
wherein the process for the image data includes at least a  
25 predetermined image processing for the image data and an image

formation processing of the image data subjected to the image processing, the accounting apparatus comprising:

a first accounting amount calculation unit for calculating a first accounting amount for the executed image processing; and

an accounting unit for executing an accounting processing of charging the requester, which has made the request for the image processing and the image formation processing, for the calculated first accounting amount.

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10. The accounting apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising:

a second accounting amount calculation unit for calculating a second accounting amount for the executed image formation processing, wherein:

the accounting unit executes the accounting processing of charging the requester, which has made the request for the image processing and the image formation processing, for the calculated first accounting amount and the calculated second accounting amount.

11. The accounting apparatus according to claim 9, wherein:

the requester includes a first requester apparatus and a second requester apparatus; and

the first accounting amount calculation unit increases the first accounting amount for the first requester apparatus when the second requester apparatus executes the image processing requested by the first requester apparatus.

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12. The accounting apparatus according to claim 9, wherein:

the requester includes a first requester apparatus and a second requester apparatus; and

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the first accounting amount calculation unit decreases the first accounting amount for the second requester apparatus when the second requester apparatus executes the image processing requested by the first requester apparatus and then the image processing requested by the second requester apparatus

15 is executed.

13. The accounting apparatus according to claim 9, wherein:

the request for the image processing designates details of the image processing; and

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the first accounting amount calculation unit calculates the first accounting amount on the basis of the designated details of the image processing.

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14. An image processing method comprising:

making a request for a process;  
executing the requested process;  
calculating an accounting amount for the executed  
process; and

5        executing an accounting processing on the basis of the  
calculated accounting amount.

15.    The image processing method according to claim 14,  
wherein:

10        the requested process includes an image processing for  
image data and an image formation processing for the processed  
image data;

the execution of the requested process includes executing  
the image processing with respect to the image data in response  
15    to the request and then executing the image formation processing  
of the image data subjected to the image processing;

the calculation of the accounting amount includes  
calculating a first accounting amount for the executed image  
processing;

20        the accounting processing includes charging the first  
accounting amount for a requester, which has made the request.

16.    An accounting method for charging for each of  
processings for image data, which is executed in response to  
25    a request from a requester, wherein the processings include

a predetermined image processing for the image data and an image formation processing for the image data subjected to the image processing, the method comprising:

calculating a first accounting amount for the executed  
5 image processing; and

executing an accounting processing of charging the requester, which has made the request for the image processing and the image formation processing, for the calculated first accounting amount.

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17. The accounting method according to claim 16, wherein:

the requester includes a first requester apparatus and a second requester apparatus; and

15 the accounting processing increases the first accounting amount for the first requester apparatus when the second requester apparatus executes the image processing requested by the first requester apparatus.

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